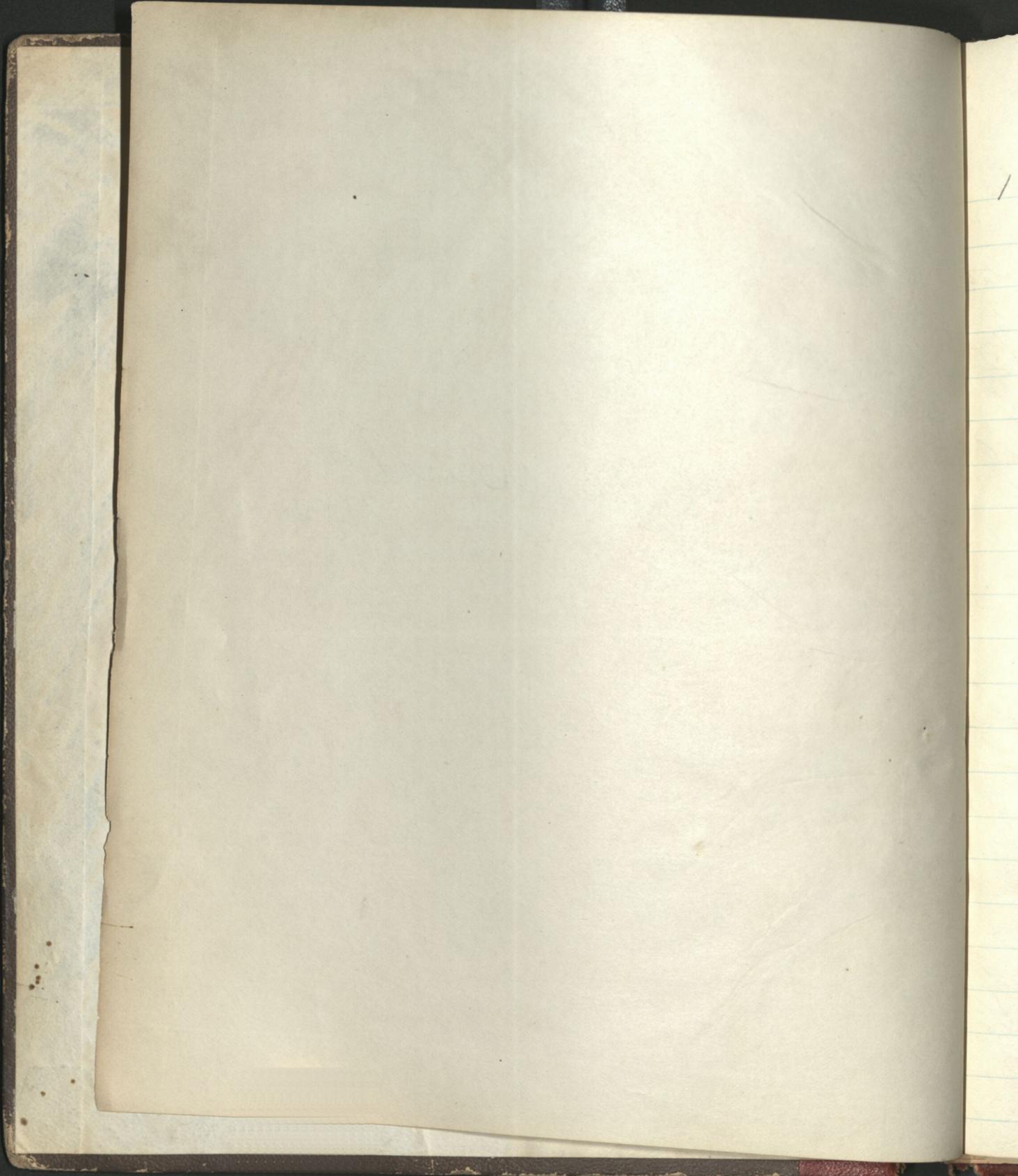


Helen Marshall.

1883



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Nantucket, Aug. 22-1883.

One of the warmest days of the summer,
yet since tea a woolen dress is comfortable.
Heard from Miss Bill of more applicants,
but I look forward to another year in P
as to going into a dungeon. The care of
school, show that I am entirely responsible
for it, the difficulty of getting a pleasant
boarding place, packing to go and unpack-
ing and settling after we arrive all looks
like a staggering weight under which I
shall sink. I am in constant fear of
a return of mother's ill turns, and every
sound through the day makes me
start; when I wake in the night, as I
never used to do, I listen to see if her
breathing is natural. If I go with
her to any place, I am in terror lest
she grow unconscious, and breathe freely
only when our own front door closes
on us and I feel we are safe again.

to have the infant class in French - it is a
mistake. Mrs. Sheaper & the others of the
former Gr. class wish to begin at once and say
they wish this year "to work." We met next Tues.
1st Mrs. S. I think we may have to divide
into two sections, and should not be surprised
if there were a little dust in the air before it
is accomplished. My books have come after
over a week's delay on the road; another
waiting for the book-case I ordered some
days ago and then I can unpack them.

Clothes and board are everything desirable.

Oct. 29 - 1885.

It was my intention to write often, but
I have so little time outside of school work
I find it impossible. Mother has been so
much better the last four weeks, I have been
corresponding in better spirits. After re-
turning from church to day, when she went
alone, she had a slight unconscious spell, but
then they come now they last less than a
minute sometimes. Yesterday morning a

note came from Mrs. Bright inviting me to dinner at 6. Her sister, Mrs. Blanchard is visiting her with two little girls. Miss Smiley and I were the only guests. It was a charming dinner party with the eight children at the table beside the four ladies; Mr. B. was in the city & did not return till 8. The dinner was served in style, from choice china, but little silver except the knives & forks. A large collection of hand painted china was on one end of the dining room arranged on shelves enclosed in glass sliding doors. The library has two sides filled with books in heavy walnut cases that reach to the ceiling, & in the parlor is another large case. The conversation of these ladies was delightful, even Boston could not produce a more refined, witty, and good sense.

I came home feeling as if I had had a vacation, & days of school teaching lay far, far back. It was a glimpse of an ideal home such as I have often dreamed of, but nice, I fear always be "in here."

Pottsville, Nov. 12. 1883.

This morning on coming up from breakfast I saw a few flakes of snow, the first this season, and as I stood watching them, I wished for the impossible —. I am lonesome and my thoughts are constantly wandering back to Nashua days, the bright ones only, of course, for the longer the time of separation the fewer seem the trials and disagreements. I am working too closely I know, or I should ^{not} be "down in the depths" quite so often. My wish this morning was utterly foolish, and whenever I think of it I try to bring myself back to common sense; but it is a sort of comfort to hang a hope you know is baseless as "the insubstantial fabric of a dream", somewhat of a relief to let the thoughts wander in air castles! Day-dreams are sweet after all.

On Sunday afternoon I went over the bridge in the 76th book of Caesar and wished he and the "tiguae binae asquipedaliae" had met the fate of that other bridge in London that forms the nursery rhyme. "O memories, oh! life that is!"

Pottsville, Nov. 30th, 1883.

This morning I started on my new venture, entered that despised field, a book-agency. For two weeks I have been thinking it over, using all my persuasive powers to quiet the inward qualmings of impending failure, smothering pride, and endeavoring to make myself feel the effort was a worthy one.

The first call upon was out. The next was in in body but out in appreciation; however he said he would tell his wife about it and possibly she would like a copy. Leaving his office I thought - "The ladies are the ones to attack, not the men" and so went to some of our school patrons.

The morning's work resulted in five names, so my hopes are not all dashed. I at first thought it would be easier to work where I am known, but I begin to question whether my feelings would not suffer less among strangers.

Last day of Feb. 1885.

So long a time of a closed Harbor is worthy of record, for it is now a month since the ice encircled the island and during that time we had but three mails. Each day we supposed that on the next the boat could go but the wind has veered from N.W. only for a few hours just long enough to raise our hopes, then persistently swung back to the N.W. again, bringing the ice in from the Sound and packing the Harbor full.

At two different times the Monohansett has come to the back of the bar & we had to see her slowly turn & back without being able to land the passengers and mails she had come expressly to bring. Yesterday on going to market I was told there was no steak to be had and later that flour and feed dealers would sell only a bushel of corn at a time. This has a serious aspect, but there is every reason to hope the boat may go on Monday.

Yesterday I met Capt. Bailey who said:
"Well, how are you? How do you carry sail up
home? All right eh? Well, keep up your
courage, you're a good girl." "Not every
agrees with you" I said. "Oh, I know you
root and branch, known you ever since
you were no longer than a marlin spike ha.
La! Well, there's lots o' hard things in this world
but you must make the best of it as it comes
along. The only way is to do the best you
can & you'll come out all right."

Now I was into Mrs. Dillard's tother
day, didn't know she'd been sick. There she
was, right under my mother bow & I didn't
know a word about it. She was telling
me how good you was to her, how you'd
carried ~~sick~~^{over} good & one thing and another.
Yes, you're a good girl, you've got a
warm corner in your heart somewhere."

We met there Josiah Folger, so
Capt. Bailey left me with a farewell
slap on the shoulder, saying: "Here

comes Josiah, I'll give him a lampooning now."

March 2-1885.

This morning Bridget came for the last time. It would have made some spirit who could read our thoughts both laugh & cry to hear the grim jokes I got off and see the way we each took to make the best of it.

When she took both my hands & looking into my face with her honest blue eyes, said:

"Don't over work - don't go beyond you're strength, for when its too late & you're laid up & can't even help yourself you'll be sorry" —

I nearly broke down. The lump had been in my throat for days past, ever since I found in order not to overrun my income this year I must cut down expenses to the lowest figure.

I have felt so sad the pain I once thought dyspepsia but which I now know was caused by worrying, returned.

After another week of ice, the boat

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returned yesterday with the mails. It had rained
all day & my spirits were at zero, when
from the office I received such a delight-
ful budget of letters the world once more
looked bright & I felt happier. One from
Josie telling of Mr. Powers being on the
Guard with peace against Butler. How
I wished I could have heard him!

May 23^d 1885.

Last evening the Shaks. club had the final supper at Mollie's, two absent.

Each plate was a bontoniere of pansies and a menu worthy to be copied.
"The Hour's now come".

Fricassed Chicken

"So - and so tender!" Mashed Potato
Sweet Potatoes. Olives. Macaroni. Bread.
Butter. Jelly. Coffee.

"arry a little there is something else!
Salad - Lettuce. Cabbage. Radishes with
Mayonnaise. Lance. Crackers and Chees
"Perchance to dream!"

Chocolate cake. Pound cake. Princess
Pudding. "Sweet to the sweet."

Bananas. Oranges. Apples.

More coffee.

"All will that ends well."

On the back of each was a quotation from
Shakespeare. Mine. - "God's blessing be

with you and with those who would make
good of bad and friends of foes".

Lotte's: - "For the poor rude world hath not
her fellow".

Eunice's: "A man's mind, a woman's
mirth."

Alice's: - "No more but I'm a woman".

M. E. Macys: - "By her meat cookery, she cut our
roots in character, and sauced our broths as
Juno had been sick & she her dieter".

Lizzie's: - "The isle is full of noises, sounds,
& sweet airs that give delight & hurt not".

Lusie's: - ~~She had ever a~~ "Her voice was
ever soft, gentle & low, an excellent thing
in woman".

Gertrude: - "For she is wise, if I can judge of
And fair she is if that's mine eyes be
And true she is, 'as she hath proved herself,
And therefore like herself, wise, fair, and
True,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul".

Among the stories was Emma's about the simplicity of dress at a Vassar reception — a such & fair of white kids, and the young man who thought of wearing a smile & a shoe string. This last prompted me to say he was cautious in extremities. Susan Coffin was discussed & her remark about the book —

"In case of accident," also about the Inebuator. Anna told of a Boston tea where they had very thin slices of bread & butter & a primrose & the boy who recited in history "the army marched up the hill pantaloon after pantaloon." The Farmer who was at a Hotel for the first time & after industriously eating for some time called the waiter & said, pointing to the bill of fare —

"If I skip from here to here can I begin here & go on to there?"

"Lary Money - Mary Money."

"Je t'adore — shift it yourself."

"A window is an office in an edifice &c."

13

"Me boy it's the Lord."

"Mademoiselle - My crush hat has the honor to
occupy the same seat as yourself."

"Has your daughter run away?" Mr.
Has yours?"

Arshan - I'm an orphan - "One who wants
to get married & can't."

"So Mr. - shot himself?" "Yer, right in
the rotunda."

"Isnat Scott? I wonder he did instantly
dreadful place to get hit."

Nantucket, Sept. 6-1885

It will be two weeks day after tomorrow since I came here to Aunt E's & one week since the house was cleared for the new occupant. The day the Davis girls went I began & in a few days every thing was stored in the attic. It seemed almost more than I could bear when I began, but I went through it & now am relieved that the confusion is over. The first night here was very sad & much of the time I cannot rouse to any effort whatever. At first I was so over tired it did not surprise me to be so listless, but now I am rested I feel no more energy. Not until I am settled in Boston at work shall I feel like myself. The stain of the summer is beginning to tell in constant headache & back ache; and then, too, the utter loneliness of heart which can not be thrown aside. One day last

wreck Emma Nickerson with her father & mother took me to ride. We travel
to Wauwinet, saw the wreck & Chad-
wick's house. The views from the latter
are beautiful. I wanted the house, it
is so quiet there and secluded and
the outlook from every room so
beautiful. The ocean seemed a friend
yes, something more, a part of my
life, myself. I always feel when looking
at it, that I could throw my arms
about it like a dear companion &
gather strength and protection.

Nantucket Sept. 13-1885.

On Tues. morning last Aunt E. proposed to go to Cottage City & give Lizzie, Henry and Helen Belcher a good send off. The result was we went to Boston and Prov. not returning till Sat. The jailor has done wonders for me, I am myself again, have gained flesh, feel well, and can go through anything. Found a letter on my return from Joe saying he had appointed Mrs Whippley his agent. This makes me mad but on reflection I think I may be glad it is not some one else. While in Prov. we saw "Bunker's Daughter". Capt W. invited Helen E. & me & took us in a carriage there return. The prospect for my departure to Boston is somewhat cloudy. I hoped to leave by another week but now think I may be delayed by the Probate business.

Boston Oct. 4 - 1885.

My arrival here yesterday afternoon
I was somewhat lugubrious. A heavy
rain compelled me to take a carriage, &
having sent my trunks by train for
I took a hansom, thinking thereby
to save 25 cents. It rained & soiled
me almost beyond endurance for a
head ache had already begun and when
I paid the man he charged 50¢ -
I should have done better to take a
comfortable carriage; it would have
cost no more.

The afternoon seemed interminable
nothing in the room but the furniture
and my trunks not arrived.
I watched of the back windows of
the opposite houses (my room is at
the back of this house) and was
amused by a beautiful buff and white
cat. She lay curled up on the
window ledge, with no back yard

85. to swim round in, no fences to climb except the short strip that separates these back stalls, they cannot be called yards. I thought this city cat had lost in its life so much that a country cat could enjoy, it was typical of the human race.

Today I heard L.R. Washburn at Paine's Memorial Hall. A small audience. His lecture was on "The Mission of Liberalism" delivered with the same deep sonorous voice I listened to years ago at Bancroft and full of noble thoughts for high and pure living. "Let men so live", he said, "that there will be no need of a Christ to pardon their sin, no Magdalene to plead for pity and forgiveness. Christ was not the only man who had given up his life as a sacrifice. Thousands had devoted their lives & given their strength in taking care of others, and were all to be called the life who

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desired the name Christ by their
noble devotion the earth would be
covered as with flowers." An orchestra
furnished music before and after the
lecture.

Sept. 5. 1885-

Called at Prof. Berlitz's School this fore-
noon and made arrangements to take a
daily lesson in both French and German.

Afterwards called on Mr. Powers.
My lessons began this afternoon but I had
tramped about so much all day, I
was too tired. While riding down
Washington St. in the horse car, I saw
Dr. Perrie's sister on the sidewalk. She
was alone. When I came home, I found
Ella & Lizzie had put in my room what
pictures they could spare.

Sept. 6. 1885-

The morning was spent in making one
of Bent's "chef d'oeuvres" with the few
fancy cards and pictures I brought.

A charming letter from Josie tells me she is now located on Columbus Av. and under full head way with studies. Shall go and see her to-morrow. The rain has persistently continued all day and I was obliged to sit two hours during the classes with wet ankles and dress. What the consequence will be I dread to learn. Ex sent a hearty welcome & promises to give me "a shake" soon.

Thrd. Oct. 7

Was much disappointed not to find Josie in when I called. Met quite unexpectedly several stant. people - Mrs. Charlotte Ann Lwin Ellen Parker & mother & Mrs. Ella Crosby - During the evening read Motley's United Republic.

Sat. Oct. 10 - 1885

My call on Josie yesterday convinced me that my apprehensions when she began her college life were well founded. She is growing away from me, the hair-breadth separation now will soon be

27
a gulf which not even loyalty can bridge.

I spent a wretched night andwoke
feeling so sad - Anything, I said, any-
thing but losing the loss of these two (F. & E.,
people who are more to me now than all
the world - sometime perhaps I shall
have courage to bear it, but not now when
my heart is still aching. The greatest
change I notice as the effect of sorrow
is my reluctance to contend even about a
trifl. A harsh word between those who are
strangers to me makes me shudder.

I do not feel crushed as I have heard
others express themselves, but subdued; when
I think of beginning teaching again it
frightens me. Where is the nerve com-
ing from, the enthusiasm and ambition
They seem now to have taken wings
& flown beyond recall. My greatest
horror, the worst condition of life I can
imagine is poverty. I wish its spectre did
not so often loom before me as my fate.

Saturday, Oct. 24-1885-

22

On Tues. Etta & I saw Rhea in "A Dangerous Game. A pleasing actress for light plays. Wed. we heard Stoddard's lecture on Napoleon. The pictures were very fine especially those of his generals & himself. Stoddard might improve his phrasology & occasionally omit - "But let us pass b &c." To-night I go with Ex (her invitation) again to hear Rhea. She will come home with me & spend the night. On Sunday last I heard Savage on "Growing old". A remarkably well condensed sermon. The German this bitter than anyt else where and his' I nows are very fine. Har decided to begin Italian and shall take the first lesson on Friday next.

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Jan. 1887.

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Your visit has left me quieted and satisfied & at peace for the present, at least. The thimble was a birthday present more than twenty years ago.

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Jan. 1887.

25

Your visit has left me quieted and satisfied & at peace for the present, at least. The thimble was a birthday present more than twenty years ago, when I seldom had presents at my holiday. That day I was very sad, perhaps with the sentimentality of youth, when suddenly the postman's ring & this little gift from an aunt in Nashua. I shall never forget how it brightened the day. She is dead long ago. So the thimble stands for a time of hunger and need and for a kind impulse that shed a great deal of sunshine on a dark day. Strange, that from a youth of such hunger & an environment that starved me so, the years should have brought me to such wealth of love and loving gifts. I have been quite complacent

my Korf." Trying to scare the "Kauf away" by spelling it wrong. I tried licorice then peppermint, then acid, now I'm at the cinnamon stage.

"Cinnamon sugar & sandy bottom look away!" Oh, I must have caught ~~had~~ myself foolish.

Kaufferdam head off!

I wish I could get out of this place, but I don't know but its too late for me to accomplish anything. One can't help doing what it does as their very being gives out no uncertain sound & out radiates influence & offers continual standards to everyone they meet.

Do you suppose I shall see you this week? I've planned a little dinner in my room & I've hoped a little hope inside o' me! But don't let this influence you much.

Ellis

Nov. 9. 1887

29

I think the truly fortunate people are those who get their living by what they love most to do, as you do. But one's tastes are not always exactly lucrative!

How pert you sit up there in your chair! But a bee will ring in a minute & you will ascend to your little Kingdom. Hope you are equal to sawing and sawing the air today. Suppose you have on your apple-hunting jacket!

Called on Mrs. Merritt, a lady of leisure but full of good works and mysticism. Her mind is an outing to mine, something new & ultra to salve and into and I get rested from myself. She is a fine conversationalist & plunges into it at once. Went, after all, to hear Miss Fowling Lann, & did so enjoy it.

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She was so deliciously herself - the old self I knew at school, with a fresh boyish voice, a little assumption of coolness and an unsuccessful quest for her pocket, which always seems to haunt her consciousness at such times! Bless her old soul! She might say with Miss Mowcher "Take a bit of advice from me & do nothing" For she isn't much more than that. This in fitting classes for Harvard & so is in town this winter.

Floss & I go to call on Sayre tonight. So the world goes round & I am at peace with all humanity. Don't know but it's a good time to die before I quarrel again with anyone.

Nov. 14. 1887.

31

Certainly it is something the enfranchised woman should learn, that one may be strong of soul & yet not manly. That manliness is not manliness & that it is never found even in men in whom intellect & spirit preponderate & that a gentleman's first requisite is to efface his physique. The more scholarly we (and Emerson says the scholar is the apex of creation) are always unobtrusive & dignified. If a woman be a power spiritually it will prove itself & give her the ascendancy she may instinctively & rightfully crave.

I had this to learn and I learned it hard. For I was a tomboy in childhood & a boyish girl in all ways till I was 30 or more. But I sickened of it by meeting others of the same type.

Some inner relationship or subtle law of being may prevent my being a "perfect lady", but there is

something better even than that for me,
 that is, because each nature has its
 own natural flowering out, and that
 would be entire subordination of the
 Physique to the spirit which should
 combine the "sweetness & light" of
 which Matthew Arnold tells, as the aim
 of all culture.

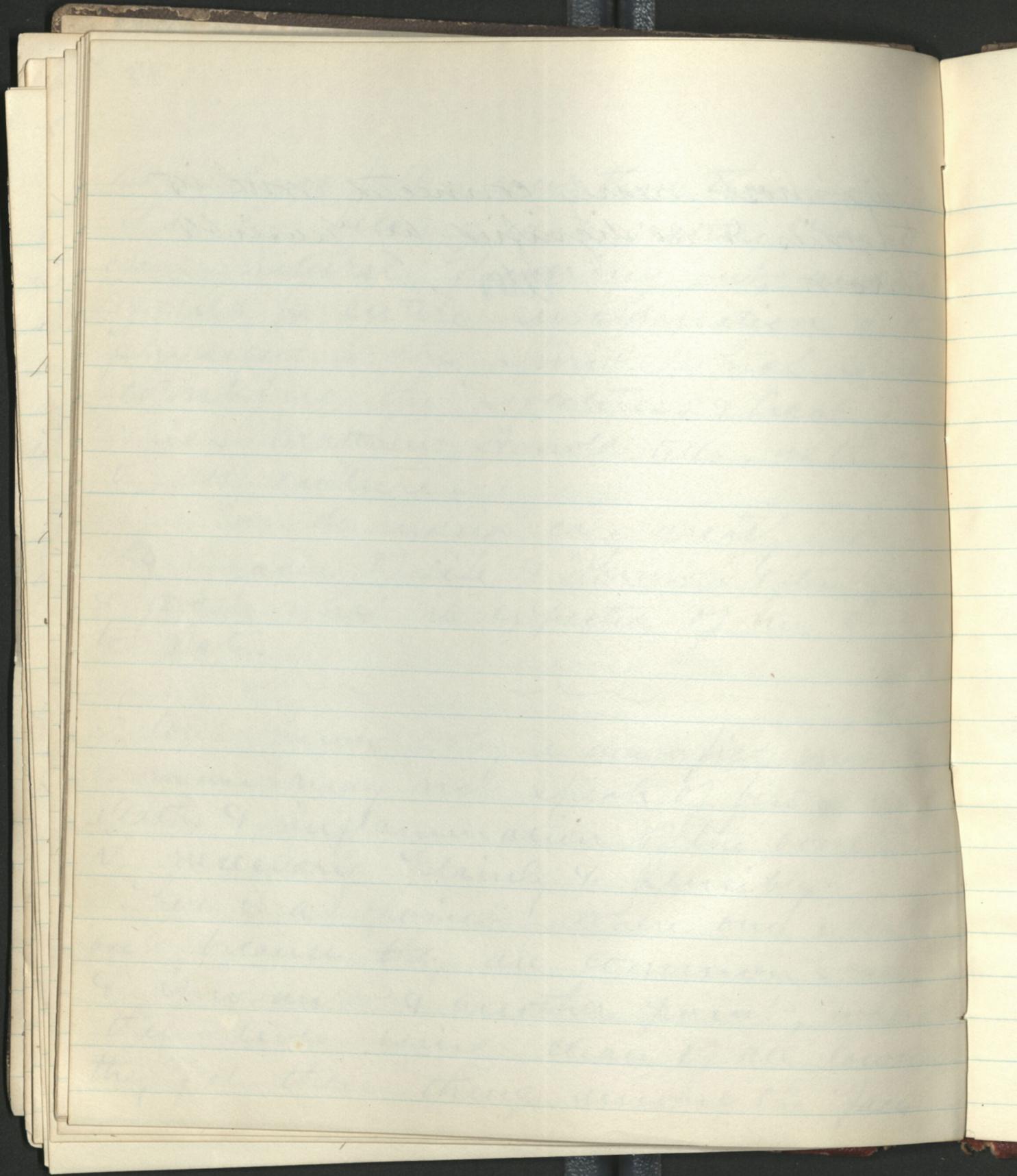
You do indeed care greatly for
 the graces of life & I know I often fail
 & forget what is expected of me till
 too late.

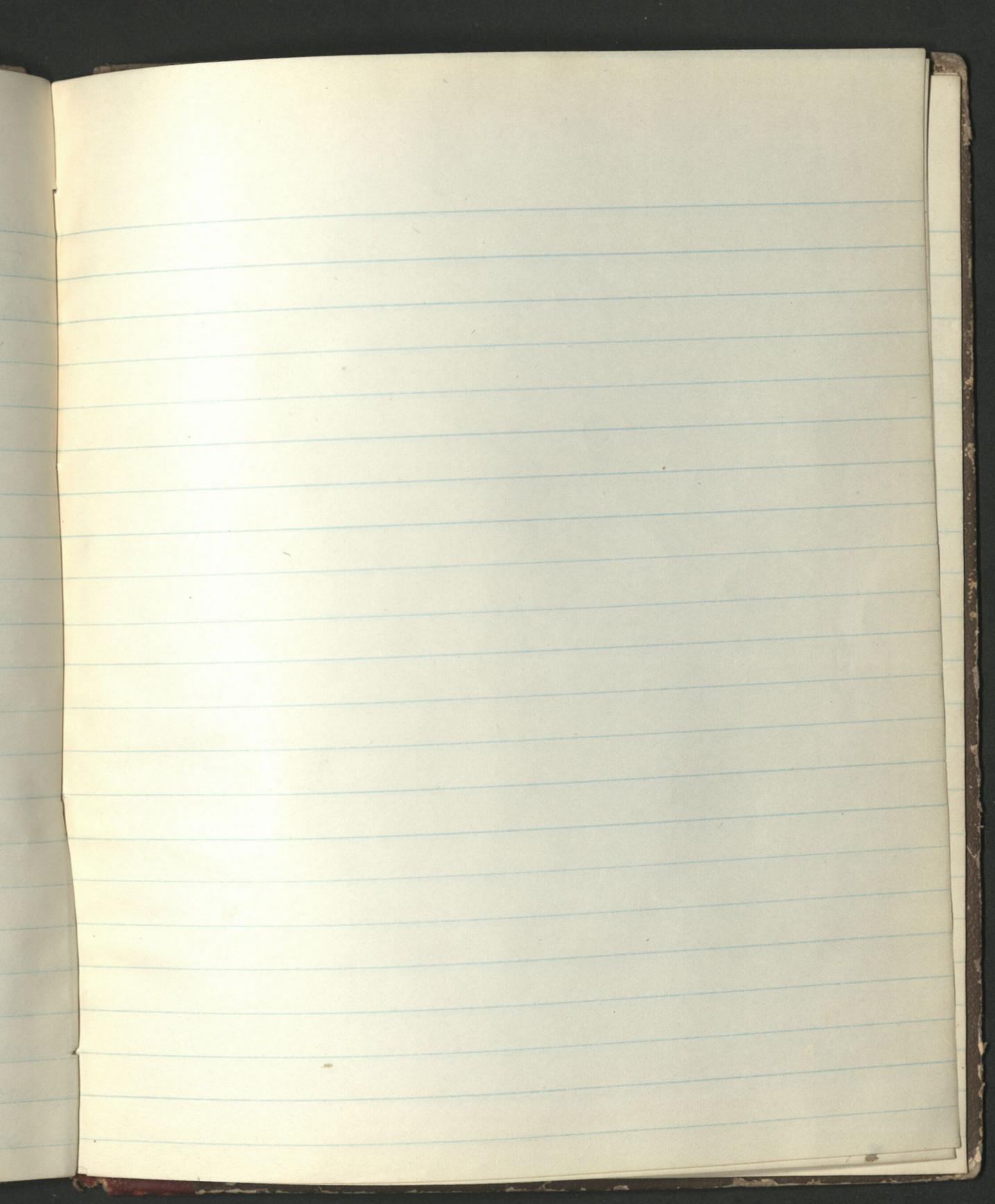
I don't know why a dignified man &
 woman may not speak of births and
 deaths & inflammation of the bowels
 if necessary plainly & sensibly.

There is a point where one speaks
 out because they are common place
 & ignorant & another point, where
 their lives being clean of all lowness
 they feel these things among the facts

of life most nearly connected with its
tragedies & so dignified by possible
sorrow.

Ellis





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